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HOUSE RESOLUTION 158

By Chumney

A RESOLUTION to honor and celebrate the 105<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the First Baptist Church Broad Avenue in Memphis.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the elected representatives of the State of Tennessee should pause to pay tribute to the dedicated members of those exemplary religious organizations that have stood the test of time; and

WHEREAS, the members of the First Baptist Church Broad Avenue in Memphis are most assuredly one such extraordinary group of people who are deserving of special praise and commendation; and

WHEREAS, this year, the church's congregation will celebrate their 105 years of positive influence in the community and the many different mission points by which they have helped to carry the Gospel; and

WHEREAS, the celebration will be a time to reflect on the past, give thanks for the present, and eagerly anticipate the future; and

WHEREAS, the First Baptist Church Broad Avenue in Memphis has weathered life's storms for over a century and pursue the higher calling of God in Christ Jesus; and

WHEREAS, it was in 1895 that a handful of Baptist believers in Christ with divine inspiration and faith in God assembled in a small home in Memphis and organized a church, naming it the First Baptist Church; and

WHEREAS, the first worship services were held at a Bush Arbor and were led by Reverend McCloud, finding shelter from the cold during the winter months in a little wooden schoolhouse at the corner of Scott Street and Broad Avenue; and

WHEREAS, in 1896, a small frame building was erected and was later destroyed by a storm; in 1912, a second building was constructed and was destroyed again by a storm; and

WHEREAS, in 1917, the construction of a third building was completed under the astute leadership of Reverend Larkin Greer; and

WHEREAS, the church experienced tremendous membership and property growth under the efficient pastorate of Reverend L.O. Taylor, when land was purchased that was later the site for the church's basement; and

WHEREAS, in 1940, during the four-year tenure of Reverend J.J. Tillman, the First Baptist Church Broad Avenue in Memphis experienced unparalleled membership and financial growth, with more than 200 members joining the devout congregation; and

WHEREAS, the construction of the present auditorium began in 1945 and was completed two years later; the pews and pulpit furniture were acquired in 1950; and

WHEREAS, in the fall of 1954, Reverend H.C. Cherry fulfilled the prestigious position of Pastor for the First Baptist Church Broad Avenue in Memphis, and he accomplished many things for the church, including the purchase of a piano, an organ, and a roof for the church; he also oversaw the redecoration of the church and auditorium, and organized the Young Adult Usher Board, the young people's choir, and the male chorus, and implemented the tithing program; and

WHEREAS, during the past 105 years, the members of the First Baptist Church Broad Avenue in Memphis have taught each other and people of the community to love one another

and to give selflessly to the stronghold of the fortress of God; they have united hearts and paved the road to Christian development and spirituality; and

WHEREAS, through their unique endeavors, the good people that comprise the First Baptist Church Broad Avenue in Memphis have given unreservedly of themselves, their time, and their talents to perpetuate God's Will; and

WHEREAS, the past has been good to the First Baptist Church Broad Avenue in Memphis, and the future promises to hold even more blessings for the member's of the church's congregation; they personify Paul's words in I Corinthians 15:38, "Therefore my brethren, be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord"; and

WHEREAS, the First Baptist Church Broad Avenue in Memphis is truly one of the great religious organizations and catalysts for positive, spiritual change in our state, and the members of this fine congregation should be appropriately honored for their exemplary service to their fellow Christians; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, That we hereby pause to honor and congratulate the congregation of the First Baptist Church Broad Avenue in Memphis on the celebration of the church's 105th anniversary and extend to each member of the congregation our best wishes for continued happiness in service to the Lord.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.